

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1802

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, CY
SUBJECT: DISMISSAL OF PAPADOPOULOS -- IMPLICATIONS FOR INTER-
COMMUNAL TALKS

REF: NICOSIA 1792

1. DISMISSAL OF PAPADOPOULOS AS GREEK CYPRIOT NEGOTIATOR DOES NOT, IN ITSELF, SIGNIFY ANY CHANGE IN GOC ATTITUDE TOWARD RESUMPTION OF INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS. ALTHOUGH PUTATIVE CAUSE OF HIS DISMISSAL WAS HIS PUBLIC CHARGE THAT PRESIDENT KYPRIANOU HAD ABANDONED MAKARIOS LINE ON A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, REAL REASON FOR DISMISSAL WAS POLITICAL RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO. PAPADOPOULOS' AIRING OF DIFFERENCES WITH PRESIDENT ON TALKS QUESTION WAS MORE A MANIFESTATION OF THAT RIVALRY THAN A REFLECTION OF BASIC DIFFERENCES SINCE PAPADOPOULOS IS ALMOST AS HARDLINE ON SUBSTANCE OF NEGOTIATIONS AS PRESIDENT. (AS ONE WAG PUT IT, ONLY NEGOTIATOR WORSE THAN PAPADOPOULOS IN TURKISH CYPRIOT VIEW WOULD BE NICOS SAMPSON.)

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2. KYPRIANOU HAS SAID HE WILL APPOINT NEW NEGOTIATOR WITHIN TWO WEEKS. WE MAY GET SOME INDICATION OF GOC'S CURRENT ATTITUDE TOWARD RESUMPTION OF TALKS BY CHARACTER OF NEW APPOINTEE. APPOINTMENT OF PERSON OF INDEPENDENT STANDING AND EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF ISSUES SUCH AS CURRENT ADVISOR TO TALKS, MICHAEL TRIANTAFYLIDIS OR STELLA SOULIOTI, FOR INSTANCE, COULD BE INTERPRETED AS INDICATION OF SERIOUS

INTENT ON GOC'S PART. APPOINTMENT OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY LOYALIST WHO IS NOT OTHERWISE DISTINGUISHED COULD SIGNIFY DIMINUTION OF INTEREST IN NEGOTIATIONS. HOWEVER, WE WOULD NOT PUT MUCH EMPHASIS ON THIS TYPE OF ANALYSIS SINCE WE HAVE CLEAR INDICATIONS FROM PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS THAT HE INTENDS TO DEEMPHASIZE NEGOTIATING TRACK AS MEANS OF RESOLVING CYPRUS PROBLEM. (INCIDENTALLY, PAPADOPOULOS CLAIMED IN JULY 17 STATEMENT (REFTEL) THAT HE AND HIS ADVISORS HAD PROFFERED THEIR RESIGNATIONS TWO WEEKS EARLIER OUT OF DISSATISFACTION WITH KYPRIANOU'S POLICIES; ADVISORS HAVE NEITHER CONFIRMED NOR DENIED THIS AND BOTH RETAIN THEIR POSITIONS AS OF NOW.)

3. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT HOW GOC WOULD REACT, GIVEN PRESENT TURMOIL, IF NEW DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD RAISE PROSPECT OF EARLY RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS. OUR GUESS IS THAT KYPRIANOU WOULD CONTINUE TO BE NEGATIVE AND WOULD LOOK FOR EXCUSES TO DELAY OR AVOID TALKS. THERE IS POSSIBILITY HOWEVER, THAT HE WOULD FEEL CONSTRAINED BY OPPOSITION PRESSURES TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING LEST HE LEND SUBSTANCE TO CHARGES HE HAS MISSED OPPORTUNITIES TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT.

4. TURKISH CYPRIOT OFFICIALS HAVE OBSERVED DISMISSAL OF PAPADOPOULOS WITH INTEREST BUT HAVE NOT PUBLICLY COMMENTED OR DRAWN ANY CONCLUSIONS. THEIR NEGOTIATOR, UMIT SULEYMAN
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ONAN, HAS TOLD US HE HAS GIVEN LETTER OF RESIGNATION TO DENKTASH TO GIVE LATTER FREE HAND IN RESPONDING TO APPOINTMENT OF NEW GREEK CYPRIOT NEGOTIATOR. ONAN WAS OF OPINION THAT ALECOS MICHAELIDES, PRESIDENT OF GOC HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MIGHT BE PICKED BY KYPRIANOU, IN WHICH CASE DENKTASH WOULD PROBABLY RESPOND BY DESIGNATING "PRESIDENT OF TFSC ASSEMBLY" OGUZ RAMADAN KORHAN AS NEGOTIATOR.
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